



Abortion Ban Not the Answer

Madison – June 4, 2015 – Today, the State Senate Committee on Health and Human Services is expected to pass, along party lines, the fast-tracked 20-week abortion ban, Senate Bill 179. “The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) opposes the proposed abortion ban,” stated Pennie Meyers, executive director of WCASA.

In addition to its long-lasting trauma, sexual assault is about domination and control over another person’s body and decision-making. Consequently, it is important to offer survivors of sexual assault opportunities to regain that control by empowering them to make their own decisions. This is especially true regarding their body and reproductive health.

Restricting access to abortion, as proposed, further limits the control survivors have to make decisions after an assault. Limiting access to abortion is also re-victimizing for survivors and impedes their long-term recovery. Such restrictions can cause a survivor who has become pregnant as a result of the assault to seek an unregulated abortion or to carry their perpetrator’s child to term.

WCASA supports policies that protect or advance women’s reproductive health. WCASA also supports policies that allow survivors of sexual assault to make their own decisions about their health and reproductive care.

If lawmakers are serious about preventing the need for abortion, then they should support policy initiatives that provide for comprehensive, evidence-based sexual health education and access to reproductive health services for all Wisconsinites. Not only is this education important for sexual health, it is also an important component to sexual violence prevention by promoting healthy sexuality and teaching consent. Prevention is incredibly important, as sexual violence affects Wisconsinites from every walk of life and every part of the state.

For the June 2 hearing on the legislation, WCASA submitted written testimony, [accessible here](#), opposing the proposed ban (Assembly Bill 237 and Senate Bill 179).

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Media Contact: Dominic Holt, 608-257-1516, x 113; dominich@wcasa.org

The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA, www.wcasa.org) is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 50 sexual assault service provider agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to survivors of sexual assault and their families. WCASA works to ensure that every survivor in Wisconsin gets the support and care they need. WCASA also works to create the social change necessary to ensure a future where no child, woman or man is ever sexually violated again.